

THE  
DEFENDERS

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# THE DEFENDERS™

THE BADDOON  
WOMEN ARE FAR  
MORE SAVAGE  
THAN THEIR  
MEN!

UNLESS I STRIKE  
SWIFTLY, HULK  
AND VALKYRIE  
ARE DOOMED!

THREE WORLDS  
TO CONQUER!

Stan Lee  
PRESENTS: **THE DYNAMIC DEFENDERS!**™

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**PLANET EARTH, 3015 A.D.:** MOST OF HUMANKIND ARE DEAD, AND THOSE WHO LIVE, LIVE AS SLAVES OF EARTH'S CONQUERORS -- THE BIANERUL BROTHERHOOD OF BABOON. YET, SMALL THOUGH ITS NUMBERS MAY BE, HUMANITY'S LONGING FOR FREEDOM HAS NOT PERISHED, AND AT THE VANGUARD OF MAN'S STRUGGLE STANDS THE INTERPLANETARY GUERRILLA BAND KNOWN AS... **THE GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY!**

# THREE WORLDS TO CONQUER!

JUST AS I TOLD YOU, LORDSIRE DROOM... THE GUARDIANS' SHIP IS IN ORBIT ABOUT THE EARTH!

OUR SENSOR SCAN CONFIRMS NINE LIFE-FORMS ABOARD. I'VE ALREADY DISPATCHED INTERCEPT CRAFT. S.R. WE...

IMBECILE!!! CALL THEM BACK. DO YOU HEAR? AT ONCE!!

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B-BUT, YOUR DOMINANCE-SURELY WE CAN'T ALLOW THEM TO ESCAPE US!

AND THEY SHALL NOT! BUT I WANT THAT STARSHIP TAKEN INTACT!

YOU HAVE YOUR ORDERS, KOZ.

AND LEAVE ME TO ATTEND TO OUR FOUR REBELS AND THEIR PASSENGERS, WHOEVER THEY MAY BE.

OBEY THEM!

BUT THE JADE GIANT REMAINS SKEPTICAL—OR PERHAPS CLAUSTROPHOBIC—DESPITE THE REASSURANCE OF THE GUARDIANS AND THEIR AFOREMENTIONED "PASSENGERS"! HULK'S FELLOW DEFENDERS!

I DON'T SEEM TO BE GETTING THROUGH TO HIM. DR. STRANGE. PERHAPS IF YOU TRIED...

HIS UNEASE STEMS FROM A MISTRUST OF TECHNOLOGY. MARTINEX.

HE'S RARELY SEEN IT EMPLOYED FOR HIS BENEFIT.

I SUGGEST YOU CONTINUE YOUR PROCEDURE. NIGHTHAWK AND I SHALL DEAL WITH OUR EMERALD-HUED TEAMMATE.

I DON'T KNOW, DOC—CHARLIE SEEMS TO BE DOING THE BEST OF ANY OF US.

I'VE A FAR MORE DRAMATIC END IN MIND FOR THEM THAN DEATH BY MOLECULAR DISPERSION FIRE.

AND THEY'LL MEET THAT END AT THE INSTANT THEY ATTEMPT TO--

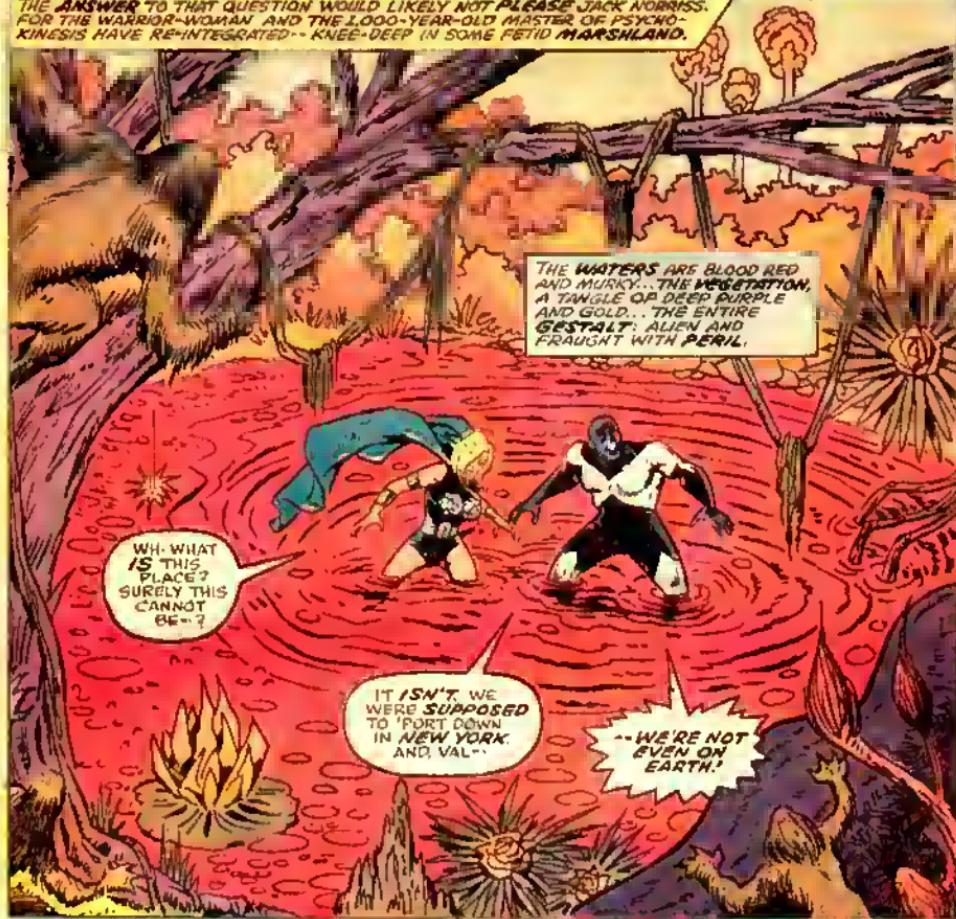




...INTO THE TRACKLESS VOID OF SUB-SPACE!



THE ANSWER TO THAT QUESTION WOULD LIKELY NOT PLEASE JACK NORRIS. FOR THE WARRIOR-WOMAN AND THE 1,000-YEAR-OLD MASTER OF PSYCHO-KINESIS HAVE RE-INTEGRATED--KNEE-DEEP IN SOME FETID MARSHLAND.



...AND THE DUO IS SUDDENLY UNDER ATTACK!

UP FROM THE MUCK... DOWN FROM THE BRANCHES OF THE TREES, THEY COME IN DROVES. SLIMY-HAIRED LIZARD-THINGS...



SAVAGE, MINDLESS, AND UNCONTROLLABLY VIOLENT, AND THOUGH THEIR CLAWS CANNOT PENETRATE ASTROS PROTECTIVE METAL SHEATH...



...THEIR SNEER WEIGHT IS SUFFICIENT TO FORCE HIS GLITTERING FORM DOWN INTO THE AIR...



TO DROWN.



VAL'S MAGIC-SPAWNED STRENGTH IS GREATER. SHE STANDS FIRM AGAINST THE CRUEL ASSAULT.



SHE EVEN STRIKES BACK.

BUT AS SHE DOES SO... A WAVE OF NAUSEA SWEEPS OVER HER.

HER THRUSTS GROW WEAKER, MORE AWKWARD.  
HER WILL TO SURVIVE SEEMS PITTED AGAINST  
SOME OTHER, EQUALLY POWERFUL INSTINCT...



THEN SHE STABBES WITHOUT  
THOUGHT, WITHOUT  
FURTHER QUESTION...



...AND REAPS  
AN UNEXPECTED  
SIDE-EFFECT.



IT IS... AS IF...  
I'D INFECTED...  
THE FATAL...  
WOUND... UPON  
MYSELF! PAIN...  
CANNOT STAND...

PAIN SUCH AS SHE HAS NEVER KNOWN SEARS  
HER EVERY NERVE, BLAZING A FIERY TRAIL TO  
HER BRAIN. SHE DOUBLES OVER... CRIES OUT...  
FALLS FACE-FORWARD INTO THE CRIMSON-  
CLOUDED WATERS.



AND  
THE BEASTS  
SURGE TOWARD  
HER CON-  
VULSING  
FORM.

WHILE MERE  
YARDS AWAY...



VOL - HAVE TO  
GET TO HER -  
HELP HER -  
SUMMON UP -  
CONCENTRATION -

--AND--BLAST  
--THESE  
--BEAVERKERS--



FACE OF THE BEASTS' ENORMOUS  
WEIGHT HE STRUGGLES TO HIS  
FEET, RAVENOUSLY GULPING IN  
THE HUMID AIR...

...CASTING  
HIS EYES  
LEFT AND  
RIGHT FOR  
SOME  
SIGHT OF

ONCE MORE, HE REACHES  
DEEP INTO HIS CONSCIOUSNESS...  
...GATHERING TOGETHER  
SPARKS OF PSYCHIC  
FORCE... FUSING...  
FOCUSING...  
HURLING THEM  
OUTWARD  
THROUGH THE  
ASYLE-PUSHER  
DISC CONCEALED  
WEATH HIS  
METALLIC  
HOOD.

VAL!! GOOD  
LORD-- THEY'RE  
POUNDING  
HER INTO THE  
GROUND!

OFF...  
GET  
OFF...  
HER...

NOW!

VAL-- HERE-- LET ME HELP YOU  
UP, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?  
CAN YOU STAND?

I-- AM NOT SURE, FELT--  
SUFFOCATING-- FACE IN  
MUD-- MY SHOULDER--  
I THINK-- IT IS  
BLEEDING, WHAT  
WERE THEY? WHY--?

I ONLY  
WISH I  
KNEW...

THEY RESEMBLE THE  
BWOOD-- SAME PHYSICAL  
CONFORMATION... BUT  
UNLESS THEY'RE SOME  
PRIMITIVE OFFSHOOT...

WHAT-- ANOTHER  
THERE WILL BE  
TIME FOR  
SPECULATION  
LATER, MAJOR.

OR SOMETHING SIMILAR



WHILE, BACK IN EARTH-ORBIT...!

MARTINEX-- YOU'VE TAKEN THAT PANEL APART AND PUT IT BACK TOGETHER, HALF-A-DOZEN TIMES. NOW!

TELL US, ALREADY-- WHAT WENT WRONG?

WITH OUR CIRCUITRY-- NOTHING. SOME OUTSIDE FORCE CAUSED THE MALFUNCTION. THERE'S NO OTHER EX-

AND OUR FRIENDS-- WHAT'S BECOME OF THEM?

THEY COULD BE ANYWHERE: ON EARTH, ON SOME OTHER WORLD, OR... DEAD, ADRIFT IN SPACE.

MY GOD-- HE ADMITS IT!!

HOW CAN YOU ALL JUST STAND THERE-- AND LET THIS ROCK-HEADED FREAK GET AWAY WITH MURDER!!

YOU YOURSELVES "HEROES" TELL SHOW YOU HOW TO BE...

WHAT-- WHAT DID YOU DO TO ME? I CAN'T MOVE!

I SHALL LIFT THE SPELL WHEN YOU THINK YOU CAN CONTROL YOURSELF, SIR

MY APOLOGIES, MARTINEX. FOR MR. NORRISS' LANGUAGE AND BEHAVIOR. I'M AFRAID HIS NOTIONS ABOUT REALITY ARE STILL SOMETHING-- SHALL WE SAY, LIMITED.

UNDERSTOOD. LET'S RETURN TO THE PROBLEM AT HAND.

LOCATING OUR FOUR STRAYS, AGREED. I HAVE AN IDEA--!

"TAKE ME TO YOUR SENSOR BANKS," THE MYSTIC ENJOINS, AND A PUZZLED BUT INTRIGUED MARTINEX COMPLIES.

AND EVEN AS  
THEY STRIDE  
THE STARSHIP'S  
METAL  
CORRIDORS...

...YONDU, LAST OF  
THE CENTAURI-IV  
PRIMITIVES, AND THE  
HULK, FIRST OF THE  
GAMMA-RAY-BORN  
PRIMITIVES, MATERIALIZE  
AMID A BIZARRE  
BACCHANALIAN  
REVEL...ON A WORLD  
NEITHER HAS EVER  
SEEN.

REVOLTING!  
GROGGED OUT  
OF THEIR MINDS--  
ALL OF THEM!

EVER THE NOBLE SAVAGE,  
YONDU'S VERY SENSE OF  
DECENCY IS OFFENDED BY  
THE SIGHTS AND SOUNDS  
OF THE RECKLESS ABANDON  
THAT SWIRLS ALL ABOUT HIM.

REAL OR IMAGINED, HIS WILDERNESS-BRED  
INSTINCTS DETECT A SINISTER QUALITY ABOUT  
IT. HE MUST KNOW MORE.



GOOZOT! HOGLO NOROSEM ZEBU, GROTNIK?  
I SHOULD'VE EXPECTED IT: THE LANGUAGE IS AS ALIEN AS THE PLACE ITSELF.



NOTHING IS RIGHT HERE!  
PEOPLE LAUGH-- DANCE-- SING--!

BUT PEOPLE  
LOOK STUPID--  
NOT HAPPY!

YOU SENSE  
IT, TOO, THEN.  
THE SADNESS  
IN THE AIR--  
THE ODOR OF--

HOW COME  
NOBODY  
ELSE RUNS  
WITH US?



ARE HULK AND FLAG-HEAD ONLY  
ONES WHO HEAR NOISE?

I DOUBT THAT  
HULK, AND YET...

BY THE  
THREE  
SUNS!!





THE YAKKA  
ARROW  
AND A  
SHRIEK  
WHISTLE...

--TO WHICH THE WEIRD SHAFT OF "LIVING" METAL RESPONDS BY LOOPING AND DIVING AROUND AND AMONG THE WOMAN'S ATTACKERS...



...SENDING THEM RACING IN PANIC FROM THE ALCOVE



AND PERHAPS THE WOMAN CAN PROVIDE THE INFORMATION WE NEED.



WOMAN HITS FLAG-HEAD FOR HELPING HER? WOMAN IS STUPID, TOO!



I CONFESS-- THE CUSTOMS  
OF THIS RACE DO-- OH, NO?



HALT-- WHERE-YOU-STAND,  
YOU-ARE-CHARGED-WITH-  
DISRUPTION-FESTIVAL-OF-  
DEATH, YOU-MUST-BE,  
BROUGHT-TO-JUSTICE.



GOOD!! HULK  
NEEDS  
SOMETHING  
TO SMASH!

WAIT, MY FRIEND--  
THEY HAVE  
WEAPONS! AND  
WE DO NOT  
KNOW WHAT  
POWERS THEY  
MAY POSSESS...



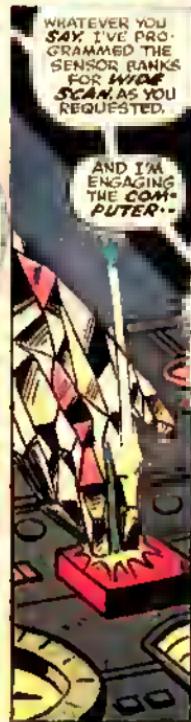
HULK  
DOESN'T  
CARE!

HULK JUST  
WANTS TO  
HIT  
SOMETHING--  
BEFORE  
STUPID PLACE  
DRIVES HULK  
CRAZY!!



THERE  
IS ONE  
MORE!





THE RESULT IS A FUSION OF MYSTICISM AND TECHNOLOGY: A SORCERER WHO CAN PROCESS AND EVALUATE DATA INPUT WITH MACHINE PRECISION... AND SPLIT-SECOND RAPIDITY...



TOGETHER THEY REACH OUT, PROBING, SEEKING, TOUCHING, TRAVERSING THE INTERSTELLAR VOID... INTUITION GUIDING LOGIC... EXAMINING WHOLE STAR SYSTEMS AT NERVE-IMPULSE CLIP...

...AND WITH SUCH ENORMOUS POWER THAT IT DEFIES EARTHLY MEASURE... OR BADOOONLY MEASURE!

THEY KNEW... THEY DISCOVERED OUR SPYING UPON THEM; BUT HOW? AND WHAT WEAPON COULD HAVE--?

THEY'VE DEVELOPED SOME NEW POWER SOURCE...







AND BACK ABOARD THE  
"CAPTAIN AMERICA"

ACCORDING TO THE INSTRUMENTS  
HE'S PROBING THE GALAXY'S  
AAR AAR.

I ONLY  
WISH WE  
COULD  
GAUGE ITS  
EFFECT ON  
STRANGE

THE STRAIN HE'S  
UNDER COULD--

INTRUDER  
ALARM-- THE  
TELEPORT  
ROOM--!!

WAIT-- YOU CAN'T LEAVE DOC  
LIKE THIS! IF ANYTHING GOES  
WRONG, HE COULD BE FAKED!

SOME-  
THING'S  
ALREADY  
GONE  
WRONG!

THAT'S ROUGHLY  
TEN TIMES  
THEIR NORMAL  
RANGE.  
INcredible.

BLEEP

"UNLESS OUR ALARM  
SYSTEM'S RUN WILD--  
WE'VE BEEN INVADED!"

AT THOSE  
WORDS,  
NIGHTHAWK  
BLANCKES  
... AND DARTS  
OFF BEHIND  
THE TWO  
GUARDIANS...

...TO THE  
TELEPORT  
CHAMBER...

... WHERE A DECIDEDLY  
UNPLEASANT SURPRISE  
AWAITS THEM.

NAMELY:

THE  
BADBOON  
ELITE  
GUARD!!!

HALT WHERE  
YOU ARE! YOUR  
SHIP HAS BEEN  
CONFISCATED...

-- IN THE  
NAME OF  
THE  
BROTHER-  
HOOD!!

NEXT  
THE SECRET OF THE SWAMPWORLD  
AND ITS BLUE-AND-GOLD-CLAD  
MEDIC... HULK AND YONDU PLAY  
THE GAMES... AND A BATTLE ROYAL  
YOU'LL NEVER FORGET, ALL IN...

# MOURNING STAR!

